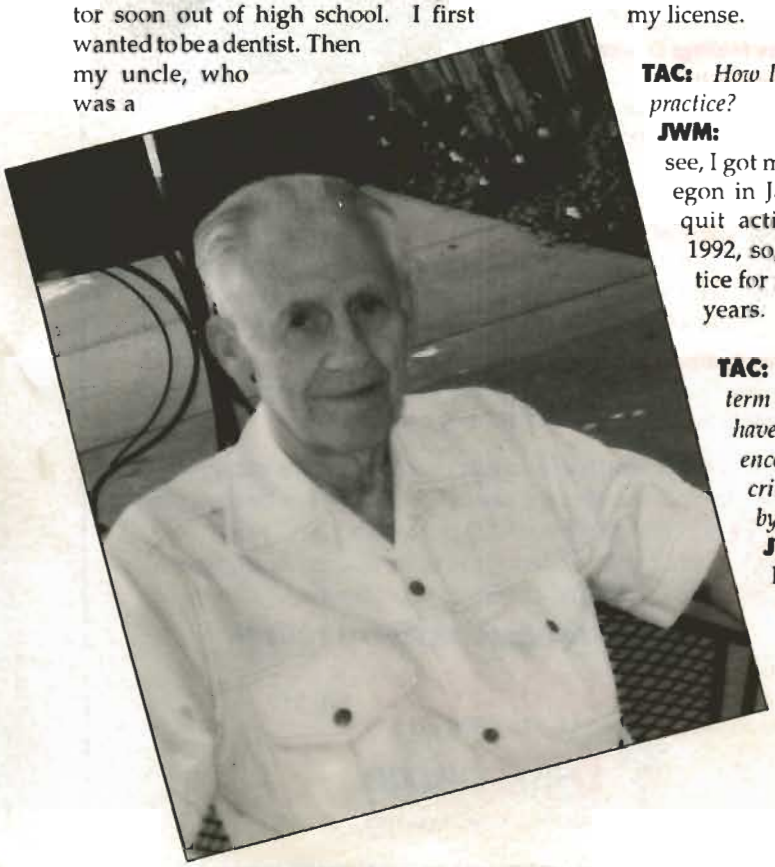
A LIFETIME'S EXPERIENCE

A Visit With John W. Myers, D.C.

On the next stop of our journey with chiropractic pioneers, TAC offers you an opportunity to meet Dr. John W. Myers, who actively practiced for more than 60 years. Dr. Myers shares some memorable cases—there was one that gained 300 referrals! Please read on for more about Dr. Myers' predictions on the profession's future...

TAC: *What was your first exposure to chiropractic?*
JWM: My mother had terrible migraines and couldn't get rid of them. As a young boy, I was very concerned. She finally saw a chiropractor, the first one in the area, and her problem with the headaches got much better.

TAC: *When did you decide to become a chiropractor?*
JWM: I decided to become a chiropractor soon out of high school. I first wanted to be a dentist. Then my uncle, who was a mortician, wanted me to work with him. I didn't want to work with the dead, so I decided to work with the living instead. It was then that I decided to become a chiropractor.



TAC: *Please describe your education and professional background.*
JWM: I graduated from Palmer College in November 1925. I came to Oregon in April 1926 and had to take six months of post graduate work to qualify for my license.

TAC: *How long were you in practice?*
JWM: Well, let's see, I got my license in Oregon in January 1927. I quit active practice in 1992, so, I was in practice for more than sixty years.

TAC: *During the term of your practice, have you ever experienced any form of discrimination? If so, by whom?*
JWM: Nothing real bad. At church I had many discussions with a medical doctor. He said that I didn't have the training and education to practice medicine. We used to discuss educational requirements for chiropractors versus medical doctors. I remember one particular discussion of subluxation to cure diseases. Our [chiropractor's] efforts centered on one subject in particular, which is why our results are usually better and have fewer than medical failures. We have specialized in one field.

TAC: *Have you had any other family members in the chiropractic profession?*
JWM: Yes. My sister, her husband, and my nephew are also chiropractors.

TAC: *Did your mother's migraine headaches also influence your sister? Did you have any influence on other family members?*
JWM: I imagine my sister was also influenced by my mother's headaches, but I had no real influence on my nephew becoming a chiropractor. I may have influenced my wife's nephew, however. I referred him to a chiropractor and he became so interested in chiropractic that he gave up teaching and went on to become a chiropractor when he was in his 30s.

TAC: *What is your opinion of the media's portrayal of the chiropractic profession?*
JWM: They are too soon to condemn and too slow to praise it for its virtues.

TAC: *How do you think it has affected our public image?*
JWM: The media influences many people. Most people do not think for themselves. They believe anything that they hear, read, or see on the television without questioning it.

TAC: *In what ways has chiropractic changed over the course of your career?*
JWM: The principle hasn't changed. The colleges have had to add basic science to get by the State Board exams. It hasn't helped the principle any, however. Many go into other areas such as physical therapy and nutrition now.

TAC: *Have your goals and perceptions of the profession changed during this time?*
JWM: No, I don't think they have really changed.

TAC: *In your opinion, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the chiropractic profession today?*
JWM: Well, the strength is it has spoken for itself. We are celebrating the 100 year anniversary of chiropractic. We will soon be the second largest healing art in the United States. Our main weakness, in my opinion, is in the interpretation of the principle and the philosophy of chiropractic. The selection of the case—determining the subluxation is the art of the practice. That is the greatest part of the principle of chiropractic. That straying from the principle somewhat weakens the profession.

TAC: *What is the most humorous thing that has happened to you as a DC?*
JWM: I heard a true story soon after entering Palmer College from a field representative. As it goes, a young doctor in a southern state had many colored clients. One lady was expecting and asked this D.C. to name the baby. She wanted some name different that no other person had. The doctor came up with "Umbilicus Pituitary." I'm sure that he had a winner!

TAC: *What are some of the memorable events that you can recall from your practice?*
JWM: We like to remember our successes and forget about our failures. I'm a miracle patient myself. From age 10 to 21 I had terrible problems with asthma. Nothing seemed to help it. My classmate said, "Let me see what I can do." He gave me one adjustment and I haven't had much asthma since.

My sister had influenza her freshman year with a high fever. I laid her on the floor and adjusted her like I was taught in class. Instantly, she broke out into a sweat and the fever was gone.

I also think of a patient who tripped on the sidewalk and jerked her body to keep from falling. She snapped her neck and started sneezing. Doctors could not help her. One of her sisters worked in the office I worked in. I gave her one adjustment and the sneezing stopped.

My most impressive case was a man who had a problem with depression. He came to me under the advice of a friend—he had no faith in me. He took all the treatments I recommended and was fine. I received approximately 300 referrals as a result of that case.

TAC: *How do you feel about chiropractic becoming part of mainstream study and being taught at the universities?*
JWM: It will kind of lose its identity and stance and become a part of conglomerate science.

TAC: *When you first began practicing 1927, did you expect chiropractic to grow and progress to its current level?*
JWM: I haven't really thought about it. Like D. Palmer used to say, "Nothing succeeds like success." Early chiropractors got such phenomenal results versus medical failures at the time. In fact, during the flu epidemic in 1917 and 1918, chiropractors had the best record of any type of doctor in treating the Spanish flu.

TAC: *Where do you envision the profession as a whole in 100 years?*
JWM: I'm expecting and have seen this happening in other countries. Our profession will be incorporated in with the other health sciences—into one big conglomerate. It will be taught in major universities rather than private colleges.◆

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